

May 31, 2008

REQUEST FOR WAIVER, CC DOCKET NOs 96-45 and 02-6

FCC:

I am submitting a request for waiver of a deadline for filing Form 471 due to extenuating circumstances. I am the technology coordinator who is responsible for filing all the e-rate forms for Crescent-Iroquois CUSD 249, Billed Entity Number 135800, Form 471 application number 552506 for funding year 2007. My name is Evelyn Dorsey, address Crescent-Iroquois High School, 100 S. Chestnut St., Crescent City, IL, 60928. My email address is dorseye@crescent.k12.il.us.

I live in the Watseka, IL, 60970 area, approximately five miles from my school. On the week of the deadline for filing the Form 471, there was flooding in Watseka, severe enough to result in assistance from FEMA. My home was flooding and I was there struggling to save personal belongings. When I realized that I needed to submit the Form 471, I rushed to school and discovered I had missed the deadline by a few hours. My school is a small, rural school with financial needs. Please consider waiving the deadline for us.

I have attached a newspaper article as evidence for the extenuating circumstances.

Thank you very much,

Evelyn Dorsey

Pontiac, Watseka will receive federal help for flood damage

By Tony Sapochetti

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PONTIAC — The people of Pontiac and Watseka will receive federal help after all for the damage done in January by Vermilion River flooding, but when it will start arriving isn't clear.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich announced Friday that federal officials have reversed their previous decision to deny a federal disaster declaration for Livingston and Iroquois counties. The declaration opens the way for cleanup and recovery grants for residents and low-interest loans for businesses.

"I'm thrilled, absolutely thrilled," Pontiac Mayor Scott McCoy said. "With all of the hard work that everyone has put into this, we will be able to get the help that we desperately need.

"This will allow residents and their community to get back on their feet and get their lives back together," he said.

Federal Emergency Management Agency officials will come to Pontiac and Watseka to set up field offices, possibly next week, Illinois Emergency Management Agency spokeswoman Patti Thompson said. The actual date hasn't been determined.

Those who have been affected by the flood first need to apply for a grant or loan through a toll-free FEMA number or on the agency's Web site.

"This federal declaration is great news for people in these two counties who were devastated by one of the worst floods to hit this area in several decades," Illinois Emergency Management Agency Director Andrew Velasquez III said in a news release. "We will begin working immediately with FEMA to get the application process started so that flood victims can get needed assistance as quickly as possible."

Federal assistance may include cash grants to help cover costs of temporary housing, home repairs or replacement or other disaster-related costs. President Bush's declaration also approved the state's request for low-interest loans through the Small Business Administration and aid for projects intended to prevent future flooding.

Thompson said FEMA officials should remain in the area until all applications are handled.

How the assessment worked

Snow melt and heavy rain Jan. 7 and 8 drove the Vermilion over its banks. The river crested Jan. 9, and city officials say they measured that crest at a record 19.5 feet — about 5 feet above flood stage.

The flood drove hundreds of people from their homes and closed some businesses in Pontiac. Washington Elementary School had 6 inches of water and remained closed until Jan. 15.

McCoy said there still are some residents who have not been able to return to their homes.

Immediately after the water receded, teams from IEMA, FEMA, Livingston County Emergency Services and Disaster Agency, and the Small Business Administration did a preliminary assessment of the

damage. That assessment was sent to Blagojevich, who declared the two counties a state disaster area and asked Bush on Jan. 18 for a federal declaration.

On Feb. 6, FEMA notified Blagojevich that the declaration had been denied because federal officials believed state and local resources were sufficient for the cleanup and recovery efforts.

The denial upset local officials, and they called on U.S. Rep. Tim Johnson, an Urbana Republican, and U.S. Sens. Dick Durbin and Barack Obama, both D-Ill., for help.

A reassessment by IEMA, FEMA and local officials found more than 1,000 homes were affected by the flooding, including 237 with major damage, in the Pontiac and Watseka areas. That was about double the number found in the initial assessment.

The appeal based on the reassessment was then submitted to Bush on Feb. 21. McCoy traveled this week to Washington, D.C., to lobby for help.

The federal lawmakers each issued statements thanking Bush for the federal declaration.

“As I said in letters to FEMA and to the White House, this is not a disaster on the scale of (Hurricane) Katrina,” Johnson said, “but it is every bit as devastating to the already fragile lives of the elderly, the parents and children who have been rendered homeless and more destitute because of a natural disaster they in no way could have prepared for or defended against.”
